



**City of Gustavus**

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Dr. Richard Spinrad  
Administrator and Under Secretary  
NOAA/National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
1401 Constitution Avenue NW, Room 5128  
Washington, DC 20230

January 19, 2024

Administrator Spinrad,

The City of Gustavus is pleased to support the Alaska Municipal League's (AML) application to the Climate Resilience Regional Challenge. For a state impacted so significantly by climate change, the proposal by AML, in collaboration with the University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA) is a step toward increasing Alaska's resilience.

While we understand that this Challenge is competitive nationally, it is worth highlighting just how important it will be for NOAA to make critical investments in Alaska's resilience planning and implementation infrastructure. We encourage NOAA to make multiple awards in Alaska, to truly demonstrate NOAA's leadership in addressing community climate resilience.

As a local government in Alaska, the City of Gustavus has statutory responsibilities to conduct necessary hazard mitigation and resilience planning but has minimal resources with which to undertake this effort. Resources to help with planning would then allow us to apply to other funding sources. In 2020 we had an atmospheric river flooding event which caused major damage to roads and properties, overflowing ditches and significant erosion in some areas. Thankfully, our former Fire Chief, Marine Facilities Coordinator, and some knowledgeable Council members had already created a hazard mitigation plan or would not have qualified for emergency FEMA funding. Overall, this limited capacity is the greatest barrier to more robust planning and action in response to the threats we routinely face. The lack of an overall hydrology plan, and roads planning (ours are all gravel except the one main ADOT-maintained roadway) precludes us from applying for several funding opportunities.

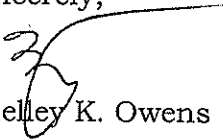
AML's efforts to increase the capacity and skills within the region will help us adapt to changing circumstances and be better prepared to ensure that our local governments have the tools and skills necessary to increase Alaska's resilience in the face of change and challenge. Our responsibility for critical infrastructure means that we will clearly benefit from this project.

As a project beneficiary, the City of Gustavus is committed to participating actively in the project's activities, including involvement in AML's cohort approach to multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation planning, and to utilizing the tools and training that the project provides.

This project will result in our community being better prepared to implement climate resilience actions, including nature-based solutions, and to leveraging federal resources in response to the priorities of our community and this Administration. As a project participant, the City of Gustavus believes that we can be most effective by participating actively, sharing our insights related to current and future resilience needs, and doing what we can to ensure the project's success.

Thank you for your consideration of this effort, and NOAA's leadership in strengthening the resilience of our communities and nation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Shelley K. Owens', with a long horizontal line extending to the right from the top of the signature.

Shelley K. Owens  
Mayor